

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

NOTES ON THE MAMMALS OF MT. GREYLOCK,
MASSACHUSETTS.

BY MANTON COPELAND.
BOWDOIN COLLEGE.



In company with Mr. Julius Rockwell of Taunton, Mass., I spent from August 27 to September 4, 1911, on Mt. Greylock, Mass., trapping small mammals. Some of the species captured proved to be of special interest, a fact which induced me to publish the following notes, briefly recording the results of our collecting, and presenting available data from other sources on the present mammalian life of the mountain.

Mt. Greylock, rising 3505 feet above the sea, is the highest peak in Massachusetts. Its faunal position is so clearly defined by Messrs. W. Faxon and R. Hoffmann in their "Birds of Berkshire County," I can not do better than quote from these authors. "Altitude has as marked an influence on the flora and fauna as latitude. It is this fact that gives Greylock its great interest in the eyes of naturalists. Rising as it does far above the surrounding country, it has the character of an island of northern vegetation—a bit of the Green Mountain thrust to the southward, just as the low, sterile plains of the southern Berkshire towns present the characteristics of Connecticut fields pushed northward. Greylock is clothed to the very summit with fairly tall trees, so that it lacks the Alpine aspect of extremely lofty mountain tops. Nevertheless, there has been found on the top of Greylock, on several occasions, a bird whose normal habitat is the edge of the tree line of the loftier northern mountains. This bird is the Bicknell's Thrush, found on Slide Mountain in the Catskills, and some of the higher peaks of the Adirondacks, the Green Mountains of Vermont, and the White

Mountains of New Hampshire—but nowhere else, as far as is known, in Massachusetts. Besides this interesting bird, a number of Canadian birds which occur only sparingly elsewhere in the county, are either common or abundant on Greylock. Such are the Winter Wren, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Mourning Warbler, and Brown Creeper.”

The mountain has been visited by at least three mammalogists, and is the only locality in the State from which several species of Canadian mammals have been recorded. In May, 1893, Mr. Outram Bangs and Mr. G. S. Miller, Jr., spent a few days on the summit, and Mr. William Dearden made two trips there in 1907-1908, collecting mammals for the Springfield Museum of Natural History. Whenever specimens taken by them add to the value of the list the records are cited. Mr. George A. Bauer, superintendent of the Greylock State Reservation, who for several years has occupied the summit house, is a keen observer of the wild life of the mountain, and has kindly supplied me with notes on the occurrence of many of the larger mammals. He is the authority for all statements followed by his initials. Unfortunately it is impossible at this time to make the list complete, as information on certain species is somewhat meagre, and entirely lacking in respect to the bats. We did no trapping below about 2500 feet.

Much credit is due my companion, Mr. Julius Rockwell, whose indefatigable zeal in field work made possible the accomplishment of our purpose. I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Francis W. Rockwell, chairman of the Greylock Reservation Commission, for giving us permission to collect on the mountain, to Messrs. William Dearden and George A. Bauer for supplying me with notes, to Mr. Charles F. Batchelder for allowing me to examine the type of *Sorex dispar*, and to Dr. Glover M. Allen for comparing some of my specimens with those in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy.

Odocoileus virginianus borealis.

Deer are commonly seen in open fields at about 2600 feet. They have appeared at the summit when driven by dogs. (G. A. B.)

Sciurus carolinensis leucotis.

Gray squirrels occur at the foot of the mountain but are rare above 1800 feet. They have been recorded rarely at the summit. (G. A. B.)

Sciurus hudsonicus loquax.

The chatter of the red squirrel was occasionally heard during our collecting trips in the more heavily timbered tracts several hundred feet below the summit. Their cone heaps were noted in favorable localities, and the species may be called rather common over the greater part of the mountain.

Tamias striatus lysteri.

The chipmunk appears to be more abundant than the last species, and its call was often heard a few hundred feet below the summit. A single specimen was taken in a mouse trap.

Marmota monax.

The woodchuck is common and universally distributed over the mountain. It was seen at about 2500 feet, and burrows noted several hundred feet higher, where one specimen was recently taken.

Sciuropterus sabrinus macrotis.

A flying squirrel was drowned in a rain barrel on the summit shortly before our visit, and I had the opportunity of examining its remains and saving the skull. It proved to be the Canadian species. Although a careful search for flying squirrels was made, no other examples were found.

Sciuropterus volans.

Mr. O. Bangs* records a single specimen of the southern flying squirrel.

Peromyscus maniculatus gracilis.

Only four examples of the Canadian deer mouse were positively identified, although a number of young, which were not preserved, may have been referable to this species. One of the former was brought in by the house cat at the summit house, and the other three were taken at "High Bridge" at an altitude of 2700 feet.

Mr. William Dearden reports having found it rather common on the summit, and Mr. Gerrit S. Miller, Jr.,† records four specimens taken May 8, 1893.

The Canadian white-footed mouse has not been taken elsewhere within the State.

Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis.

This species of white-footed mouse is far more abundant than the preceding, and over thirty were trapped in various localities, principally on the summit.

* Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., Vol. 10, 1896, p. 166.

† Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., Vol. 8, 1893, p. 69.

Evotomys gapperi ochraceus.

The red-backed mouse appears to be the most abundant of the small mammals, and nearly fifty were taken. It was secured in every station trapped where the conditions were at all favorable for its occurrence.

Microtus pennsylvanicus.

The meadow mouse seems to be rather uncommon, and only nine were secured. Their runways, however, were conspicuous within a limited area a few hundred feet below the summit, but judging from the results of our continued trapping the colony has recently undergone marked depletion.

Mr. William Dearden took about 14 specimens.

Microtus pinetorum scalopsoides.

One of the most interesting and certainly most inexplicable results of our collecting was the capture of seven examples of the northern pine mouse. A small colony was discovered on the very summit of the mountain, living in the many cavities which occurred beneath the spreading roots of the rather open growth of spruce and yellow birch. Six were taken here, three of which were about half grown. The other specimen, an adult, was trapped by a hole in the bank of the stream at "High Bridge," two miles and a half down the mountain. Near by were taken such northern species as the woodland jumping mouse and smoky shrew.

Dr. Glover M. Allen has kindly compared the series with specimens in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy and finds them "quite typical of *scalopsoides*."

How this animal has wandered from its accustomed home and taken up its abode on a mountain top in the midst of Canadian environment, is a question difficult to answer. Springfield, Mass., and Lake George, N. Y., appear to be the nearest points to Mt. Greylock where the pine mouse has been found. It may, therefore, have followed some tributary of the Connecticut or Hudson Rivers, or worked northward through the valley of the Housatonic to the Berkshires. In all likelihood future collecting in western Massachusetts will reveal its presence more commonly than is now known.

Zapus hudsonius.

Only one example of the Hudson Bay jumping mouse was secured. It was taken on the edge of a small grassy clearing surrounding a pond a few rods from the spot where the first specimen of *Sorex dispar* was captured.

Napaeozapus insignis.

The woodland jumping mouse is common on Greylock, and no less than twenty-six were trapped. Three were captured in woods on the summit, but the greater number were found on the banks of a mountain

stream which flows under "High Bridge." It has not been taken elsewhere in Massachusetts, although previously recorded from Greylock.

Erethizon dorsatum.

The porcupine is occasionally seen, principally at the summit. (G. A. B.)

Lepus americanus virginianus.

The varying hare is everywhere common. (G. A. B.)

Sylvilagus transitionalis.

The cottontail is common at the lower levels of the mountain, but seldom seen on the summit. (G. A. B.)

Lynx ruffus.

The tracks of the bay lynx are very rarely observed on the mountain. One was seen near "Jones Nose" (about 2700 feet) over four years ago. (G. A. B.)

Mr. William Dearden saw one on the Cheshire Harbor trail in July, 1908.

Vulpes fulvus.

The red fox is a common animal on the lower slopes of the mountain but is not seen above 2500 feet. (G. A. B.)

Mephitis putida.

The skunk occurs commonly down the mountain, and has been recorded once on the summit. (G. A. B.)

Lutreola vison.

Mink are to be found following the mountain streams but do not occur higher than about 2200 feet. (G. A. B.)

Putorius sp.

Weasels are rather common all over the mountain. (G. A. B.)

One was reported during our stay, and we learned that a "family" at one time occupied the summit near the barn. As we were unable to secure any, I can not state which species is the more abundant: *P. cicognanii* or *P. noveboracensis*.

Procyon lotor.

Although raccoons are never observed on the summit of the mountain, they occur rather frequently below. One was taken at "High Bridge" about three years ago. (G. A. B.)

Sorex personatus.

Seven long-tailed shrews of this species were taken on the summit, where it appeared to be the only representative of the group. One of these was captured by the house cat, which during our stay brought in no less than five species of mice and shrews. Mr. William Dearden also found this shrew inhabiting the summit, where he trapped about a dozen.

Sorex fumeus.

Five smoky shrews were taken at "High Bridge" by the edge of the stream along which woodland jumping mice occurred in abundance. A single specimen was caught in swampy woods, where *Sorex dispar* was found.

Mr. William Dearden secured two specimens on the summit. One of these, which is in the Museum of Natural History at Springfield, Mass., I have had the opportunity to examine through the kindness of the curator.

The examples here noted, constitute, I believe, the first records for the State.

Sorex dispar.

Two specimens of this rare shrew were obtained, the first recorded from New England. One was trapped under a rock at the edge of a moist grassy clearing, surrounded by woods, at an altitude of 3000 feet. A brook, which had been dammed to form a shallow pond, flowed through this little meadow, which was inhabited by several species of mice and shrews.

The second specimen was taken at a slightly lower altitude in swampy woods of spruce, hemlock and scattered birches thickly carpeted with sphagnum. A small brook ran through the woods, and near it the shrew was trapped in a runway beneath a log.

Both specimens agree perfectly with the type in the Batchelder collection.

Blarina brevicauda talpoides.

The short-tailed shrew is one of the most abundant mammals on the mountain, and twenty-five were taken. It was found in nearly every region trapped.